

# PUMP FICTION

## WHAT'S YOUR EXERCISE I.Q.

	True	False
1. Be wary of exercise devices that promise total fitness "in just three minutes a day."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Even when they are relaxing, people who exercise regularly burn more calories than inactive people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The total price of an exercise machine that's advertised at "4 easy payments of \$50" is about \$200.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Weight lifting has no health benefit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Sit-ups and ab crunches are the best way to burn fat off the stomach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Cross-training is the best route to overall fitness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. It's best to buy exercise equipment that comes with a "money-back guarantee."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. No exercise device can help you spot reduce.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Before-and-after claims in ads for exercise devices may be misleading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## TIPS FOR BUYING EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

Shaping up is hard to do. Before you buy exercise equipment, the FTC wants you to:

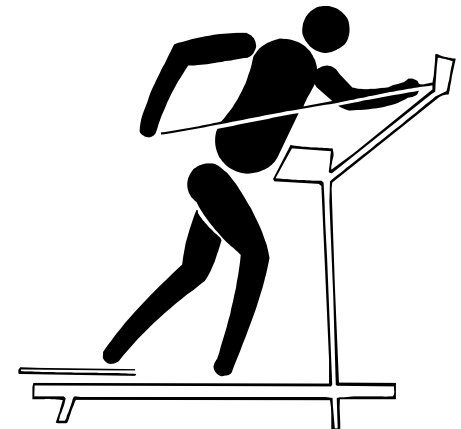
***Look for equipment that offers a total workout.*** The best route to overall fitness is one that incorporates a variety of physical activities as part of a daily routine.

***Remember that no exercise device can burn fat off a particular part of your body.*** To turn a "beer belly" into a "six pack stomach," you must combine sensible eating with regular exercise that works the whole body. The reason: Everything you eat has calories and everything you do uses calories. Your weight depends on the number of calories you eat and use each day. Increasing your daily physical activity will burn extra calories.

***Be skeptical of outrageous claims.*** Ads that promise "easy" or "effortless" results are false. And many ads that make big claims about the number of calories you'll burn also may be deceptive. Some of these claims are true only for athletes already in top physical shape; others may not be true for anyone.

***Think twice about dramatic testimonials or before-and-after pictures from satisfied customers.*** These may not be typical. Celebrity endorsements don't necessarily mean the equipment is right for you, either.

***Get the total cost of the product before you buy.*** Total cost includes sales tax, shipping and handling, delivery, and setup fees. Get the details on warranties, guarantees, and return policies. Check out the company's customer service and support, too, in case you need replacement parts. Try any toll-free numbers to see whether help really is accessible.



## **WHAT'S YOUR EXERCISE I.Q.**

1. **TRUE.** Real fitness requires regular activity, sensible eating, and a healthy lifestyle. Exercise need not be grueling, but there are no "three minute a day" shortcuts to better flexibility, improved muscular strength, enhanced physical endurance, or improved cardiovascular or respiratory efficiency—or weight loss.

2. **TRUE.** Everyone burns calories while they're exercising. But one of the great benefits of an active lifestyle is that it can boost your metabolism even when you're at rest.

3. **FALSE.** Shipping charges, postage, handling, delivery, or other hidden fees can add on to the cost of exercise equipment. Whether you order by phone or buy at a retail store, find out the real cost before making a purchase.

4. **FALSE.** Strength training isn't just for the "body beautiful" types. Lean muscle burns more calories than flab. Sensible weight training helps maintain muscle tone and endurance.

5. **FALSE.** The most common cause of a "beer belly" is fat—not weak muscles. Sit-ups may help tone the abs, but only a sensible diet combined with regular

exercise can turn a "beer belly" into a "six pack stomach."

6. **TRUE.** Cross-training—a regular program combining different types of activity—is your best route to fitness. A combination of your favorite activities—walking, swimming, biking, dancing—can help you shape up while avoiding the boredom and burnout of one kind of exercise.

7. **TRUE.** But get the facts first. Not all "money-back guarantees" are the same. How long do you have to return the equipment? If you order through the mail, how much will it cost to return it? Who pays for repairs?

8. **TRUE.** No exercise device can burn fat off a particular part of your body. The reason: Everything you eat has calories, and everything you do uses calories. Your weight depends on the number of calories you eat and use each day. Increasing your daily physical activity will burn extra calories.

9. **TRUE.** Before-and-after pictures can be eye-catching, but they may not always tell the whole story. Regular exercise is an important ingredient in moving from plump to "pumped," but diet plays a key part, too.

## **RESOURCES**

For more information about advertising claims for health, weight loss, and fitness products, visit the FTC's ConsumerLine on the Internet at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or contact:

Consumer Response Center  
Federal Trade Commission  
Washington, DC 20580

For more information about health and physical activity, contact:

American Council on Exercise  
1-800-825-3636

The President's Council on  
Physical Fitness and Sports  
200 Independence Ave., SW  
Humphrey Bldg., Room 738 H  
Washington, DC 20201

Shape Up America!  
6707 Democracy Blvd., Suite 306  
Bethesda, MD 20817  
FAX: 301-493-9504

The Weight-control Information  
Network  
1 WIN WAY  
Bethesda, MD 20892-3665  
1-800-946-8098

Your local county office of the  
U.S. Department of Agriculture's  
Cooperative Extension Service

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American College of Sports Medicine  
American Council on Exercise  
American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine  
Shape Up America!

## **FTC** **briefs**

### **THE MUSCLE HUSTLE**

Looking for a way to keep fit, stay limber, or lose weight? A diet of regular exercise can help. Which exercise is best? The one you're really going to do.

**Test Your  
Exercise I.Q.**

If you're considering buying fitness equipment for home workouts, remember that it can represent a sizable financial commitment as well as a lifestyle change. The Federal Trade Commission advises all workout "wannabes" to exercise good judgment when evaluating advertising claims for fitness products.

Federal Trade Commission  
Bureau of Consumer Protection  
Office of Consumer and Business Education  
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